

WSDOT Ferries Division

ESHB 2358 Status Report:

Vehicle LOS Standards & Baseline Forecasts

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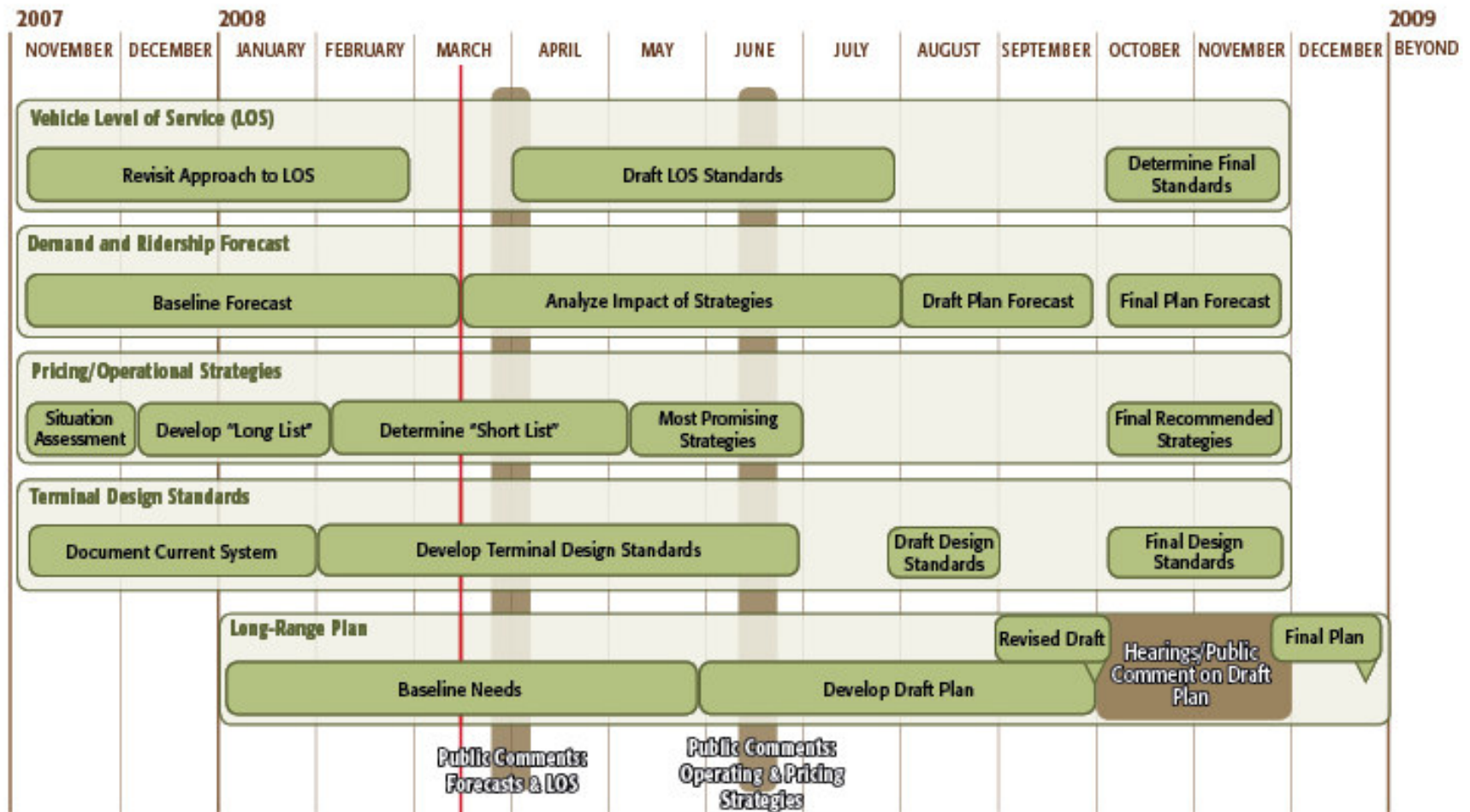
Overview

- Where we are in the process
- A look ahead to major milestones in work plan
- Baseline ridership forecast update
- Proposed new approach to vehicle level-of-service (LOS) standards

Long-Range Plan Building Blocks

- The work plan that will culminate in a revised Long-Range Plan for the ferry system is organized according to a series of building blocks:
 - Fall 2007: Situation assessments and current conditions
 - March 2008: Baseline ridership forecast and revised level-of-service (LOS) approach
 - June 2008: Most promising operational and pricing strategies
 - July 2008: Baseline capital and operating needs assessment (cost of maintaining current services) & terminal design standards
 - August 2008: New service and investments to meet future needs
 - September 2008: Revised DRAFT Long-Range Plan
 - December 2008: Final Long-Range Plan

ESHB 2358 and WSF Long-Range Plan Work Program



Ridership Forecast Progress

- Technical team has been working since September
- Team includes representatives from WSF, WSDOT, PSRC, and JTC
- Progress to date includes:
 - Comprehensive review of methods for forecasting ridership and revenues
 - Reconciliation of WSF planning and revenue models
 - Improvements to the WSF planning model, consistent with federal planning requirements
 - Development of a baseline set of ridership forecasts, which is currently undergoing extensive technical team review

Ridership Forecasts – Preliminary Findings

- Overall rate of growth in ridership is expected to be lower than 2006 forecasts and in-line with current State Revenue model forecasts
 - Previous forecast: 2006-2030 – 70% increase in total riders
 - New initial baseline forecast: 2006-2030 – just under 40% increase in total riders
- Improved performance of planning model based on decision to switch to Sound Transit methodology
- Minor revisions are likely as we consider the effects of Tacoma Narrows Bridge projections and recreational travel demand
- The impact on system sizing will depend on how much vehicle demand has changed

Next Steps – Ridership Forecasts

- Route-level forecasts are being developed this week.
- Finalize baseline weekday forecasts (Mid-March)
- Share findings at March/April Public FAC meetings
- Analyze ridership implications of alternative operational and pricing strategies (April – May)
- Perform detailed assessments of recreational and peak season ridership (June – August)
 - Incorporate WSTC Phase II onboard survey findings
- Develop Long-Range Plan forecasts (June – August)
 - Incorporate impact of pricing and operational strategies
 - Incorporate any service changes to address level-of-service deficiencies

Moving Washington

Strategically Added Capacity

- New 144-car vessel and Steel Electric Class replacement programs
- Additional vessels
- Additional terminal capacity

Operate Efficiently

- Joint Ferry/Bus fare (“Smart Card”)
- Coordination with Highway Advisory Radio and Variable Message Signage
- Signal pre-emption at some terminals to speed loading/offloading
- New terminal designs to speed bus passenger transfers
- Fuel conservation “smart vessels”

Manage Demand

- Carpool/vanpool priority loading program
- Variable pricing
- Transit/Ferry Coordination
- Reservation Systems



What does ESHB 2358 Require for Level-of-Service Standards?

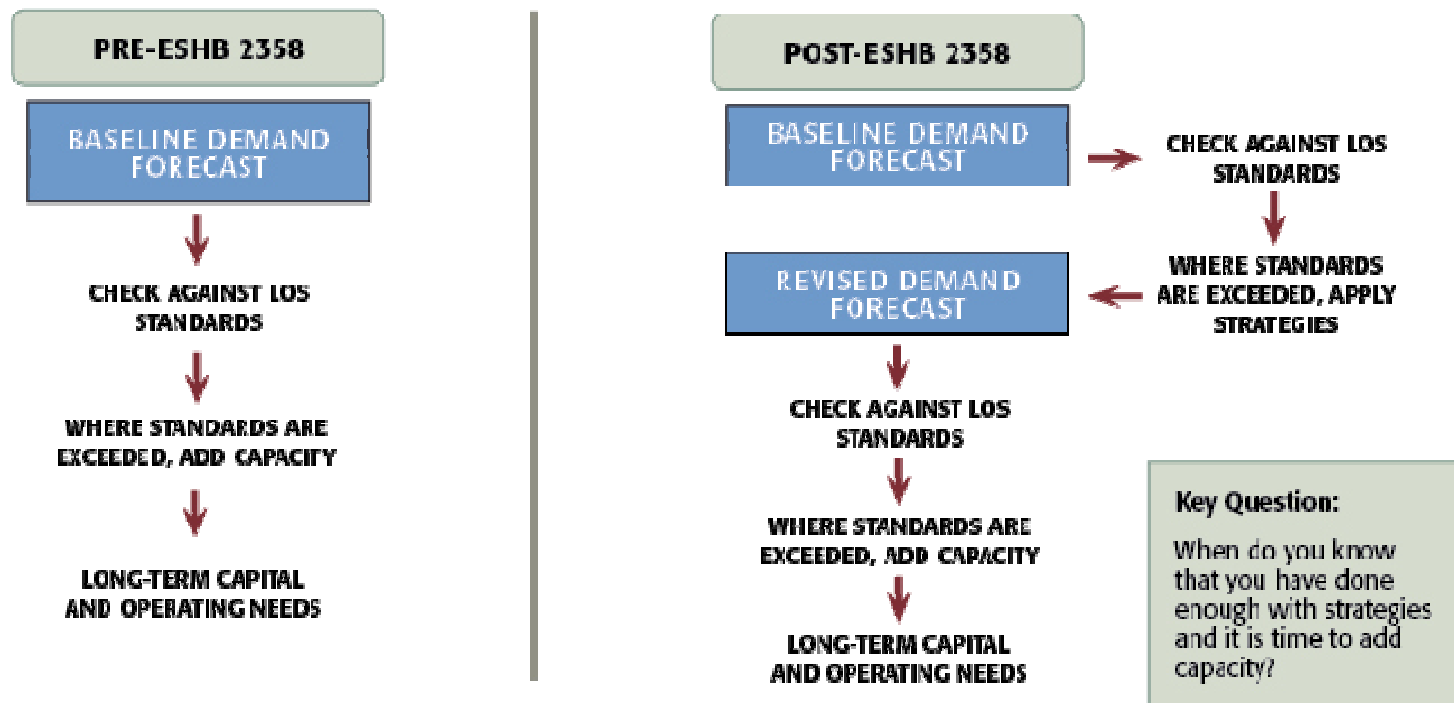
- ESHB 2358 includes two key directives that relate to ferry level-of-service standards:
 - WSF is to re-establish the vehicle level-of-service standards
 - WSF is to proactively manage demand for ferry services through the use of operational and pricing strategies to maximize the use of existing assets and minimize the need for additional investments.
- The effect on future demand of recommended operating and pricing strategies **must** be considered in planning for future service or capacity improvements

Level-of-service Update

- Progress to-date includes:
 - Situation assessment – review history, current approach and new legislative direction
 - Develop an approach to Level-of-service standards that meets the requirements of planning under ESHB 2358
 - Identify measures for which standards will be set, which will guide planning for future capacity additions

Why Do LOS Standards Matter?

1. WSDOT/WSF needs a mechanism to determine when it is appropriate to add capacity (system-sizing)
2. System sizing determines what is the appropriate fleet size (# of vessels) and composition (type & size of vessels)
3. Future fleet determines the needs for terminal improvements



Key Issue: Too Many Cars During the Peak Periods

Addressing the Challenge through Demand Management

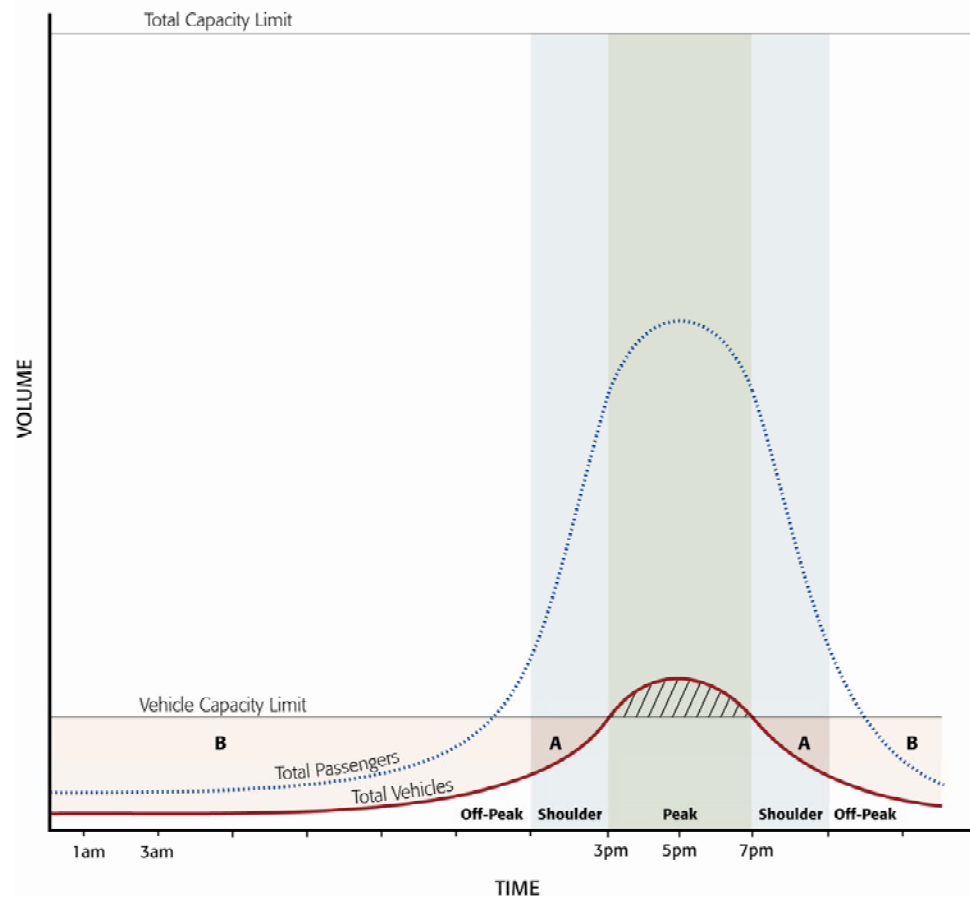
Shift Demand to Increase Utilization

- Shift to Different Time
- Shift to Different Mode (Walk-on or Passenger)
- Shift to Smaller Cars
- Shift to Different Route or Off Ferry System

Strategies Need to Target Opportunities

- Grow Markets for Low or Underutilized Sailings

Conceptual Demand Curve
Commuter Route: Westbound Weekday

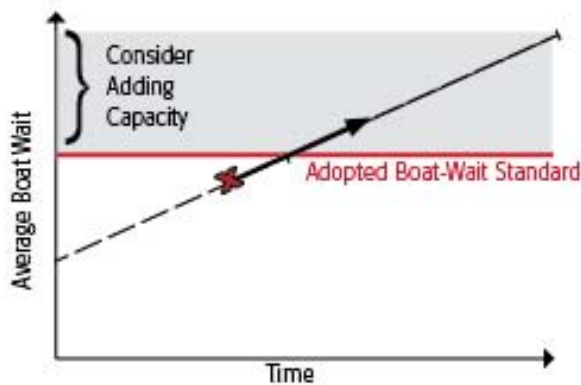


How Can the LOS Standards Support Balancing Strategies and Capacity?

Pre-ESHB 2358

Standard based on Congestion Only

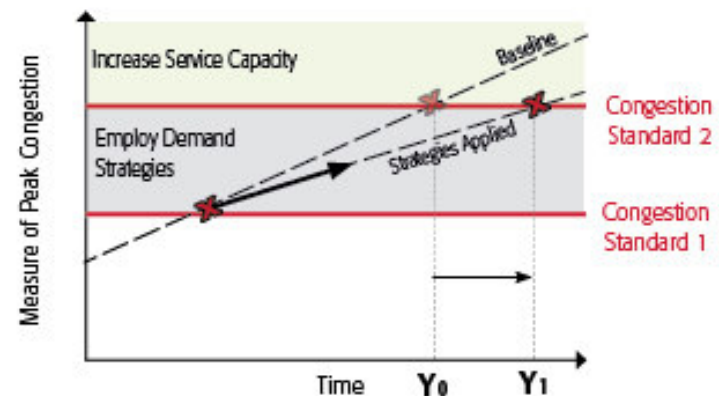
- Standards designed to address acceptable levels of congestion for various user groups
- Focus is on “typical” peak conditions
- Exceeding any single standard would suggest a need to add service



Proposed Approach

Standards based on Congestion and Service Effectiveness

- Meet needs of all Markets
- Use current assets most efficiently
- Adjust for growing demand but do not overbuild the system
- Vary by route and/or travel shed



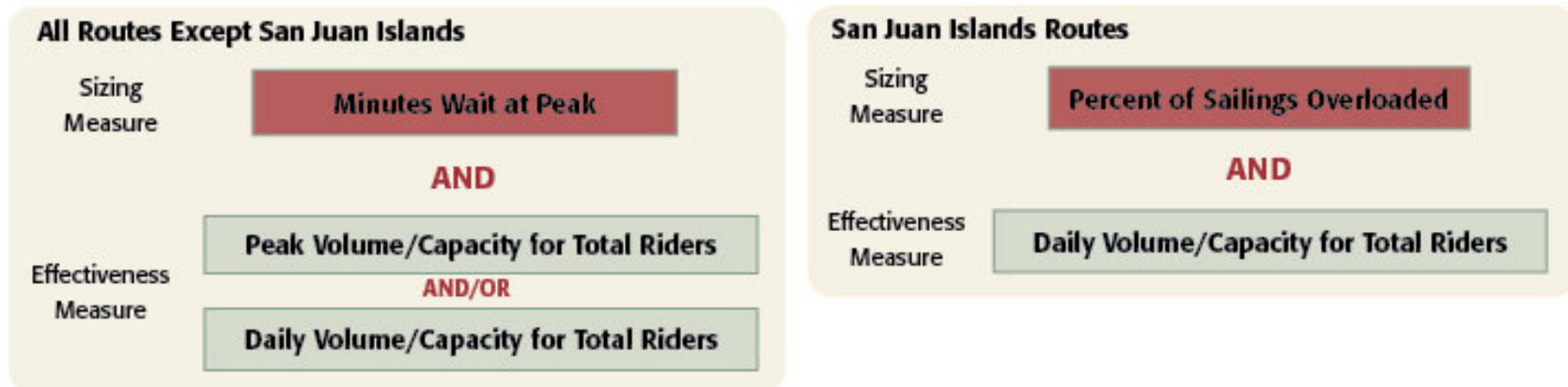
How Do You Know When to Add Service?

Measuring Congestion:

- Congestion during “typical” peak period (minutes of wait on commuter routes, percent of overloads in San Juan Islands)
 - Use the current definition of “typical” peak period
 - Consider adding standards for low season (February) and high season (August)

Measuring Effectiveness:

- Volume/Capacity ratio provides a high-level measure for tracking increased vessel utilization
 - May want more specific measures to track progress of pricing and operational strategies during the implementation of the Long Range Plan (e.g. mode share, average vehicle occupancy, etc ...)



Next Steps – LOS

- Feedback on the conceptual framework and possible refinements based on input, including coordination with other performance measurement efforts
- Feedback on preliminary measures, including during FAC public meetings in March/April
- Incorporate WSTC survey findings
- Finalize the approach and measures
- Evaluate and recommend appropriate standards and/or targets for each measure
- Standards and targets will be based on:
 - Ridership demand forecasts
 - Effectiveness assessments of potential strategies
 - Long-term funding implications
 - Impacts to customers and communities
 - Revenue implications

Questions?

For more information on
WSDOT Ferries Long Range Plan Work Program,
please contact

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